



**NATIONAL
ENDOWMENT
FOR THE ARTS**

Types of Artist Data Analyzed by the NEA Research Office

Primary data collected from specific artist groups (e.g., jazz artists, choreographers, and visual artists)

Secondary data collected through membership surveys of artist organizations such as unions or service organizations (e.g., actors and musicians)

Secondary data collected by statistical agencies of the federal government, such as the U.S. Census Bureau or the Bureau of Labor Statistics

ARTISTS IN THE WORKFORCE

1990-2005



National Endowment for the Arts
Office of Research & Analysis

Data Sources

- **U.S. Census Bureau**
 - 1990 and 2000 decennial censuses
 - 2003-2005 American Community Surveys

Artist Occupations

Actors

Announcers

Architects

Art directors, fine artists, and animators

Dancers and choreographers

Designers

Entertainers and performers

Musicians

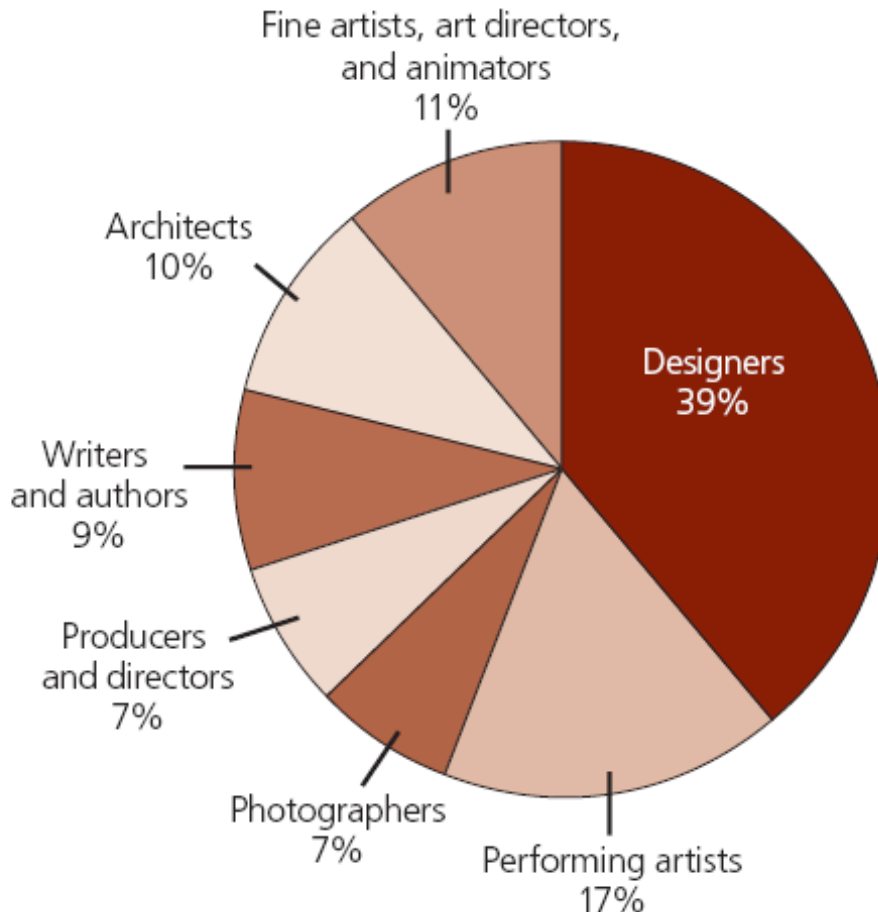
Photographers

Producers and directors

Writers and authors

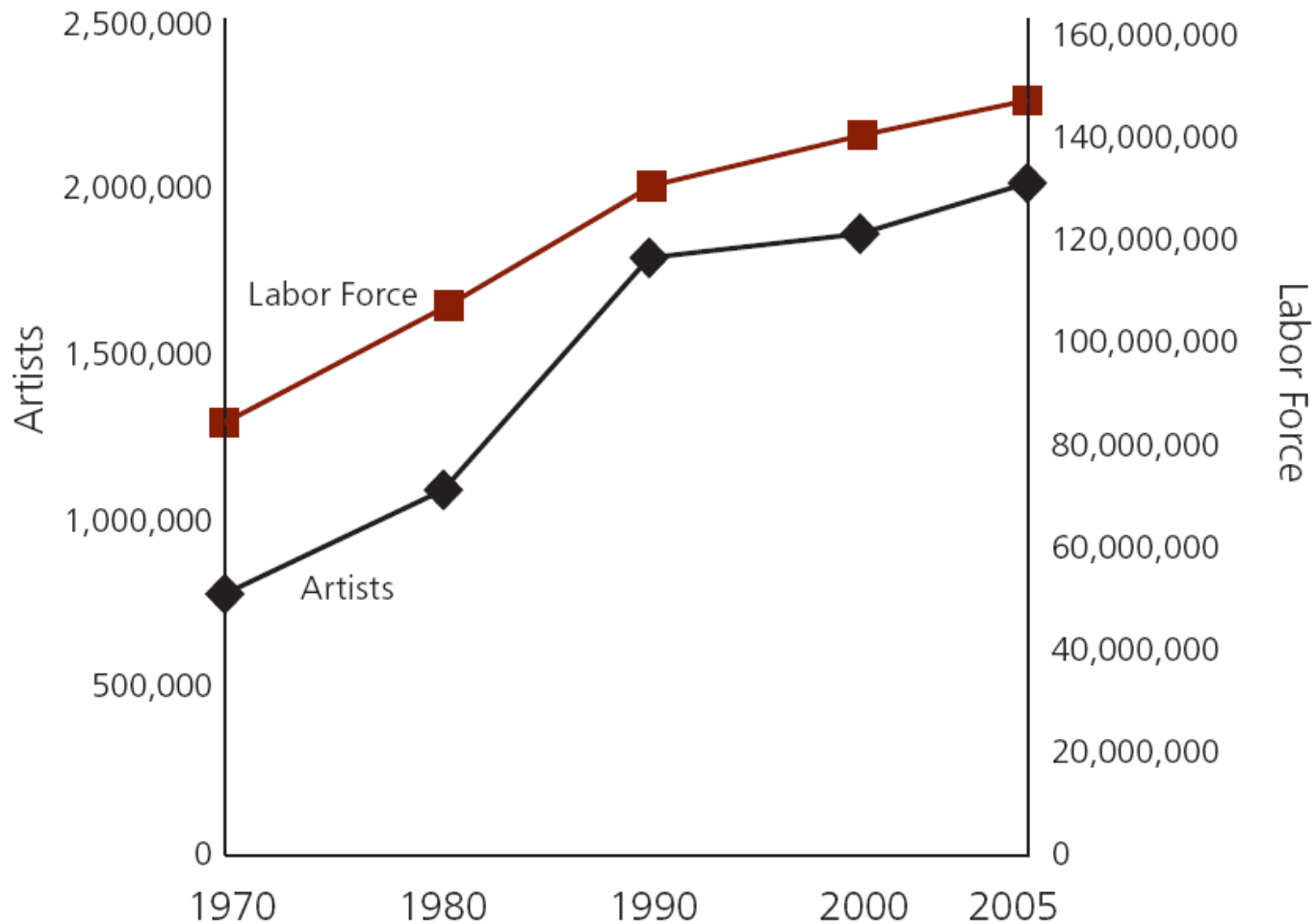
Nearly two million Americans are artists.

Artist occupations, 2003–2005



Visual arts
occupations =
996,355
Americans,
or **50%** of the
total artist
workforce

The number of artists has kept pace with the growth in the overall labor force.



Artists are highly concentrated in urban areas.

Top 10 metropolitan areas by number of artists, 2000

Los Angeles-Long Beach, CA	140,620	} More than 20% of all artists
New York, NY	132,990	
Chicago, IL	64,800	
Washington, DC-MD-VA-WV	47,360	
Boston, MA-NH	38,885	
Philadelphia, PA-NJ	35,670	
San Francisco, CA	34,470	
Atlanta, GA	34,350	
Detroit, MI	33,215	
Minneapolis-St.Paul, MN-WI	28,685	

The West and South have seen the greatest growth in artists by state.

- In Nevada, Utah, Oregon, and Arizona, the artist population grew at 2.5 to 5 times the rate of that of the U.S. labor force.
- Florida and Georgia led the South with a 23 percent growth in artists—double the national average.
- 29 percent of all artists now live in the West, and another 29 percent in the South.

Key Trends

- Education
- Employment
- Income
- Diversity

Artists are generally more educated than the workforce as a whole.

	Percentage with a bachelor's degree or higher
Overall labor force	28%
All artists	55%
Fine artists	51%
Designers	46%

Artists generally earn less than workers with similar levels of education.

	Median income (2005 dollars)
Civilian labor force	\$30,100
Professional and related occupations	\$43,200
All artists	\$34,800
Fine artists, art directors, and animators	\$30,000
Designers	\$34,400

Artists are 3.5 times more likely than other workers to be self-employed.

	Percentage self-employed
Overall labor force	10%
All artists	35%
Fine artists	56%
Designers	25%

Fewer artists have full-year, full-time jobs than other workers.

	Percentage of full-year, full-time workers
Overall labor force	61%
All artists	55%
Fine artists	52%
Designers	62%

Part-year and part-time workers as a percentage of all workers, 2003-2005

	Part-year (less than 50 weeks)	Part-time (less than 35 hours)
Total labor force	30.2	21.9
Professional and related workers	31.4	19.3
Total artists	32.7	27.9
Fine artists, art directors, and animators	37.9	29.7
Designers	28.4	22.0

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey Public Use Microdata Samples, 2003, 2004, 2005.

Women remain underrepresented in several artist occupations.

- Visual artists are an exception.
- Yet a greater percentage of women than men work part-time only.

Percentage Female, 2003-2005

	2003-2005
All artists	45.9%
Actors	45.1%
Announcers	22.4%
Architects	22.2%
Art directors, fine artists, and animators	47.4%
Dancers and choreographers	75.9%
Designers	54.9%
Entertainers and performers	45.1%
Musicians	36.1%
Photographers	42.8%
Producers and directors	35.3%
Writers and authors	54.9%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey Public Use Microdata Samples, 2003, 2004, 2005.

Conclusions

Trends from 1990 to 2005 similar to the overall labor force:

- Steady growth percentage, greater diversity
- Regional growth concentrated in the South and West

Important differences for artists:

higher levels of education
more likely to be self-employed
low earnings relative to education

Artists in a Year of Recession (Q4 2007 - Q4 2008)

[Source: NEA Research Note #97, March 2009]

- Twice the unemployment rate of “professional” workers
- Unemployment rates rose faster than for total workforce
- Performing artists, fine artists, and writers have highest unemployment rates
- 74,000 left artist workforce, although total workforce gained 800,000



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